



**TULARE COUNTY  
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY**

Timothy W. Lutz, MBA  
Agency Director

Nilsa Gonzalez • Public Health Branch Deputy Director • Environmental Health Director

**FOOD FACILITY  
PLAN CHECK REQUIREMENTS**

Prior to constructing, enlarging, altering or converting any building for use as a food facility, you must submit **two (2) complete sets** of construction plans for review to Tulare County Environmental Health. Environmental Health must approve plans and a building permit must be obtained from the appropriate city or county building department prior to construction.

1. **FILING FEE:** A filing fee of **\$160.00** is required to be paid at the time plans are submitted for review. Please make check payable to: Tulare County Environmental Health.
2. **PLAN REVIEW FEE:** A fee of \$122.00 per hour is charged for plan review.
3. **PLANS:** Plans shall be detailed and drawn to scale (1/4" = 1'0") and shall include;
  - a) Complete floor plan with plumbing and equipment details;
  - b) Complete exhaust ventilation plans including make-up air and exhaust calculations.
4. **FINISH SCHEDULE:** The applicant shall provide a finish schedule for floors, walls and ceilings that indicate the type of material, surface finish, color, and the type of coved base at the floor-wall juncture.
5. **INSPECTION:** Please contact this office when construction is approximately 70% complete and again when approximately 90% complete to arrange for Environmental Health inspection.
6. **FINAL INSPECTION:** A final inspection and written approval is required prior to beginning operation. Please allow three days advance notice to arrange for the final inspection.

**IF CONSTRUCTION DOES NOT BEGIN WITHIN 12 MONTHS FROM THE TIME THE PLANS ARE SUBMITTED, CANCELLATION OF THESE PLANS MAY OCCUR. YOU WILL BE INFORMED IN WRITING OF THIS CANCELLATION. ADDITIONAL PAYMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES FEE WILL BE REQUIRED UPON RE-SUBMITTAL OF PLANS.**

AFTER PLANS HAVE BEEN APPROVED, A COPY WILL BE RETURNED TO THE APPLICANT AND THE OTHER COPY WILL REMAIN WITH ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH. THE RETURNED PLAN MUST BE KEPT AT THE JOB-SITE UNTIL FINAL INSPECTION. ANY REVISIONS TO PREVIOUSLY APPROVED PLANS SHALL BE RESUBMITTED FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL.

## FOOD FACILITY CONSTRUCTION GUIDELINES

### 1. FLOORS:

The floor surfaces in all areas in which food or beverages are prepared, prepackaged, or stored (including walk-in refrigerators), where any utensil is washed, where refuse or garbage is stored, where janitorial facilities are located in all toilet and handwashing areas, except with respect to areas relating to guestroom accommodations and the private accommodations of owners and operators in restricted food service facilities, and in employee change rooms shall be smooth and of durable construction and nonabsorbent material that is easily cleanable. Floor surfaces shall be coved at the juncture of the floor and wall with a 3/8-inch minimum radius coving and shall extend up the wall at least 4 inches. Base coving shall be flush with the wall and to the floor.

Floor surfaces may be a commercial grade vinyl flooring, quarry or ceramic tile, smooth sealed concrete, or comparable approved material. Approved antislip floor finishes or materials in areas where necessary for safety reasons may be used.

### 2. WALLS & CEILINGS:

The wall and ceiling surfaces in all areas in which food is prepared, prepackaged, where any dish or utensil is washed, where refuse or garbage is stored, where janitorial facilities are located, in toilet and handwashing areas shall be of durable, smooth, nonabsorbent, and easily cleanable surfaces. Conduits of all types shall be installed within walls as practicable. When otherwise installed, conduits shall be mounted or enclosed so as to facilitate cleaning.

Materials other than smooth plaster or putty coat plaster, drywall with sealed and taped joints and some pre-finish wallboard panels such as fiberglass reinforced plastic (FRP) require submission of sample. Surfaces must be sealed with a high gloss enamel, epoxy, or other approved sealer. Acoustical plaster on ceilings is not acceptable. Acoustical tile may be approved if it complies with the above requirements and a sample is submitted for approval.

NOTE: The above wall and ceiling construction requirements are not applicable in any of the following areas: (1) Walls and ceilings of bar areas in which alcoholic beverages are sold or served directly to the consumers, except wall areas adjacent to bar sinks and areas where food is prepared; (2) Areas where food is stored only in unopened bottles, cans, cartons, sacks, or other original shipping containers; (3) Dining and sales areas; (4) Offices; (5) Restrooms that are used exclusively by the consumers, except that the walls and ceilings in the restrooms shall be of a nonabsorbent and washable surface.

### 3. WINDOWS:

Pass-through window service openings shall be limited to 216 square inches each. The service openings shall not be closer together than 18 inches. Each opening shall be provided with a solid or screened window, equipped with a self-closing device. Screening shall be at least 16 mesh per square inch. Passthrough windows of up to 432 square inches are approved if equipped with an air curtain device. The counter surface of the service openings shall be smooth and easily cleanable.

### 4. LIGHTING:

Light bulbs shall be shielded, coated, or otherwise shatter-resistant in areas where there is nonprepackaged ready-to-eat food, clean equipment, utensils, and linens, or unwrapped single-use articles. Shielded, coated, or otherwise shatter-resistant bulbs need not be used in areas used only for storing prepackaged food in unopened packages, if the integrity of the packages cannot be affected by broken glass falling onto them and the packages are capable of being cleaned of debris from broken bulbs before the packages are opened.

### 5. VENTILATION:

Approved exhaust ventilation shall be provided to keep areas free from excessive heat, steam, condensation, smoke, and vapors. Make-up air shall be provided at 80% of the rate of that exhausted.

### 6. HOODS AND DUCTS:

An effective mechanical exhaust hood ventilation system shall be required for all cooking equipment such as ranges, griddles, ovens, deep fat fryers, barbecues, rotisseries, salamanders, etc. Installation must meet local Building and Safety Department requirements and have grease filters or other means of grease extraction. The grease extraction systems shall be of steel construction or of other approved materials and readily accessible for cleaning.

### 7. TOILET FACILITIES:

The number of toilet facilities required shall be in accordance with applicable local building and plumbing

ordinances. Toilet tissue shall be provided in a permanently installed dispenser at each toilet. The restrooms shall be provided with tight-fitting, self-closing doors. All restrooms shall be provided with exterior ventilation. Handwashing sink(s) shall be provided for employees within or immediately adjacent to restrooms and shall be equipped with hot and cold running water through a mixing faucet. Handwashing facilities shall be provided with the following in dispensers: handwashing cleanser (no bar soap) and single-use towels or a heated-air hand drying device.

8. **EQUIPMENT/UTENSIL DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION:**

All new and replacement food-related and utensil-related equipment shall be certified or classified for sanitation by an American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accredited certification program (i.e. NSF-certified). All new and replacement electrical appliances shall meet applicable Underwriters Laboratories standards for electrical equipment as determined by an ANSI accredited certification program.

Materials that are used in the construction of utensils and food-contact surfaces of equipment shall not allow the migration of deleterious substances or impart colors, odors, or tastes to food and under normal use conditions shall be safe, durable, corrosion-resistant, and nonabsorbent, sufficient in weight and thickness to withstand repeated warewashing, finished to have a smooth, easily cleanable surface, and resistant to pitting, chipping, crazing, scratching, scoring, distortion, and decomposition.

9. **INSTALLATION OF EQUIPMENT:**

All equipment shall be either moveable (i.e., on casters), light enough so as to be easily moved by one person, or elevated on legs that provide at least a six-inch clearance between the floor and the equipment. Sealing to the floor is acceptable only if no other means is available for equipment such as beer coolers behind bars, refrigerators, and large bakery ovens. If the equipment is exposed to spillage or seepage, it shall be sealed to walls or adjoining equipment. A minimum of 30 inches clearance must be provided for all aisles and working areas.

All equipment on counters, tables and shelves that are not easily lifted are to be installed on approved four (4) inch high legs, or sealed to counter, table, shelf, etc.

10. **KITCHEN HANDWASHING SINK:**

All food preparation facilities shall be equipped with a handwashing sink and shall be used for no purpose other than hand washing. The handwashing sink shall be in a readily accessible location within the food preparation area. Handwash soap and paper towels in dispensers must be provided. The handwashing facility shall be separated from the warewashing sink by a metal splashguard with a height of at least 6 inches, that extends from the back edge of the drainboard to the front edge of the drainboard, the corners of the barrier to be rounded. No splashguard is required if the distance between the handwashing sink and the warewashing sink drainboards is 24 inches or more.

11. **FOOD PREPARATION SINK:**

All permanent food facilities that wash, rinse, soak, thaw, or similarly prepare foods shall be provided with a food preparation sink. The food preparation sink shall have a minimum dimension of 18 inches by 18 inches in length and width and 12 inches in depth with an integral drainboard or adjacent table at least 18 inches by 18 inches in length and width. The food preparation sink shall be located in the food preparation area, provided exclusively for food preparation, and accessible at all times. The sink shall be equipped with an adequate supply of hot and cold running water through a mixing valve. Each food preparation sink shall be drained by means of indirect waste pipes and shall be air-gapped to an approved floor sink.

12. **KITCHEN UTENSIL (WAREWASHING) SINK:**

Manual warewashing sinks shall have at least three compartments with two integral metal drainboards for manually washing, rinsing, and sanitizing equipment and utensils. Sink compartments shall be large enough to accommodate immersion of the largest equipment and utensils. Each warewashing sink shall be drained by means of indirect waste pipes and shall be air-gapped to an approved floor sink. Warewashing sinks must have sloped drainboards and equipped with a metal back-splash. Sinks must conform to selected NSF standards.

13. **JANITORIAL SINK:**

A single compartment janitorial sink with hot and cold running water is required for general clean up in the food facility. Appropriate backflow device shall be provided.

14. **WATER HEATER:**

A water heater of sufficient capacity to furnish hot water for food preparation, dishwashing, cleaning (janitorial

sink), and hand washing purposes shall be provided. Hot water shall be supplied at a minimum temperature of at least 120°F measured from the faucet.

15. **GARBAGE DISPOSAL:**

Garbage disposals may be installed in drain boards if the drain board is lengthened to accommodate the disposal cone in addition to the minimum required drain board size. Garbage disposals may not be installed under a sink compartment unless an additional compartment is provided for the disposal.

16. **WAREWASHING MACHINES:**

Warewashing machines shall be provided with an easily accessible and readable data plate affixed to the machine by the manufacturer that indicates the machine's design and operating specifications including the temperatures required for washing, rinsing, and sanitizing, the pressure required for the fresh water sanitizing rinse, unless the machine is designed to use only a pumped sanitizing rinse, and the conveyor speed for conveyor machines or cycle time for stationary rack machines. Mechanical machine warewashing shall be installed and operated in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications.

Warewashing machine shall be equipped with a temperature measuring device that indicates the temperature of the water as the water enters the hot water sanitizing final rinse manifold or in the chemical sanitizing solution tank. Warewashing equipment shall be provided with two integral metal drainboards of adequate size and construction. One drainboard shall be attached at the point of entry for soiled equipment and utensils and one shall be attached at the point of exit for cleaned and sanitized equipment and utensils.

17. **WALK-IN REFRIGERATORS AND FREEZERS:**

All pre-manufactured units must be NSF approved. Floors, walls, and ceilings shall be constructed as mentioned in Items 1 and 2 of this guideline. All materials shall be water, moisture, and acid, chemical and wear resistant. Drain lines shall be air-gapped to an approved floor sink, unless unit is self-contained with an approved evaporator.

18. **STORAGE SHELVING:**

Shelving shall be constructed of an easily cleanable design of smooth metal or wood, which has been finished and sealed. The lowest shelf shall be at least six (6) inches above the floor, with a clean, unobstructed area below.

19. **PLUMBING AND ELECTRICAL:**

All plumbing, electrical, and gas lines shall be concealed within the walls, floor or ceiling. Where this is not possible, all runs should be at least 2 inch away from the walls or ceiling and six (6) inches off the floor. Where conduit or pipelines enter a wall, ceiling or floor, the opening around the line shall be tightly sealed. Conduit or pipes shall not be installed across any aisle, traffic area or door opening. All plumbing and plumbing fixtures shall be installed in compliance with applicable local plumbing ordinances.

20. **FLOOR SINKS & BACKFLOW PREVENTION:**

All steam tables, ice machines and bins, food preparation sinks, warewashing sinks, display cases, walk-in refrigeration units, dipper wells and other similar equipment that discharge liquid waste shall be drained by means of indirect waste pipes, and all wastes drained by them shall discharge through an airgap into a floor sink or other approved type of receptor. Refrigeration units equipped with evaporators is exempt. Floor sinks must be installed flush with the floor surface. Floor sinks/drains shall be located to be readily accessible for inspection and cleaning. Horizontal runs of waste lines shall be six (6) inches off the floor, sloped 1/4" per foot, and shall terminate at least one (1) inch above the overflow rim of the floor sink. Waste lines shall not cross any aisle, traffic area or door opening.

Warewashing machines may be connected directly to the sewer immediately downstream from a floor drain, or they may be drained through an approved indirect connection.

21. **GREASE INTERCEPTOR:**

If provided, a grease trap or grease interceptor shall not be located in a food or utensil handling area unless specifically approved by the enforcement agency. Grease traps and grease interceptors shall be easily accessible for servicing. Waste pretreatment must be installed in the waste line leading from sinks, drains and other fixtures or equipment in establishments where grease may be introduced into the drainage or sewage system in quantities that can effect line stoppage or hinder sewage treatment or private sewage disposal.

The sizing of the grease trap cannot be approved by Tulare County Environmental Health Department. The City or County Building official will evaluate and approve the grease trap/interceptor type, size, and location outside of

food or utensil handling area.

22. **VECTOR CONTROL:**

A food facility shall at all times be constructed, equipped, maintained, and operated as to prevent the entrance and harborage of animals, birds, and vermin, including, but not limited to, rodents and insects. All exterior walls or other openings shall be tightly sealed. If the wall vent opens directly into a food preparation or storage area, then 16 mesh per square inch screening will be required. Employee entrance doors to food preparation areas shall be self-closing and kept closed when not in use.

Insect control devices that are used to electrocute or stun flying insects shall be designed to retain the insect within the device. Insect control devices shall be installed so that the devices are not located over a food or utensil handling area and dead insects and insect fragments are prevented from being impelled onto or falling on nonprepackaged food, clean equipment, utensils, linens, and unwrapped single-use articles.

Delivery and large cargo-type doors must be self-closing and equipped with an effective means to control fly and insect entry. The separation may be achieved with overhead air curtains or fly fans.

23. **GARBAGE AND TRASH AREA:**

A receptacle shall be provided in each area of the food facility or premises where refuse is generated or commonly discarded, or where recyclables or returnables are stored. Waste receptacles shall be provided for use by consumers. Floors, walls, and ceilings where refuse is stored shall be smooth, nonabsorbent, and easily cleanable.

Outdoor Refuse Area & Receptacles: If provided, an outdoor storage area or enclosure used for refuse, recyclables, and returnables shall be constructed of nonabsorbent material such as concrete or asphalt and shall be easily cleanable, durable, and sloped to drain. Receptacles and waste handling units for refuse and recyclables shall be installed so that accumulation of debris and insect and rodent attraction and harborage are minimized and effective cleaning is facilitated around and, if the unit is not installed flush with the base pad, under the unit.

24. **LOCKERS & DRESSING ROOMS:**

Lockers or other suitable facilities shall be provided and used for the orderly storage of employee clothing and other possessions. Lockers shall be located in a designated room or area where contamination of food, equipment, utensils, linens, and single-use articles cannot occur. Dressing rooms/areas shall be provided and used by employees if the employees regularly change their clothes in the facility. Employees include owners and/or managers. No food storage is permitted in dressing rooms.

**IMPORTANT! A person proposing to build or remodel a food facility shall submit complete, easily readable plans drawn to scale, and specifications to the enforcement agency for review, and shall receive plan approval before starting any new construction or remodeling of any facility for use as a retail food facility. Plans and specifications may also be required by the enforcement agency if the agency determines that they are necessary to assure compliance with the requirements of California Retail Food Code, including, but not limited to, a menu change or change in the facility's method of operation.**

***If you have any questions please call Tulare County Environmental Health at (559) 624-7400.***

###